

EPA Region III

Office of Public Affairs

EARLY BIRD HEADLINES

Friday, May 13, 2011

*** MORNING HOT LIST ***

Marcellus Shale drillers balk at EPA pressure on state to tighten wastewater disposal rules

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on Thursday stepped up pressure on Pennsylvania regulators to tighten wastewater disposal standards for natural gas drillers, a federal assertion of authority that rubbed the Marcellus Shale industry the wrong way. The EPA directed the six biggest Marcellus Shale natural gas operators to disclose how and where they recycle or dispose of drilling wastewater in the region. Those companies have promised to abide by a call from Pennsylvania's top environmental regulator to stop sending their wastewater to 15 treatment plants by Thursday. The letter from EPA Regional Administrator Shawn M. Garvin to Michael Krancer, secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, implies that Krancer's voluntary directive to the industry is insufficient. "While we appreciate PA DEP's effort to reduce oil and gas wastewater discharges to Pennsylvania's waters, we believe modifications to the prior wastewater disposal practices should be legally enforceable to the greatest extent possible," Garvin said.

EPA directs six drillers to disclose waste plans

SCRANTON TIMES-TRIBUNE Federal environmental regulators have directed six of the most active natural gas drillers in Pennsylvania to disclose how and where they plan to treat or dispose of their wastewater once they comply with a state request to stop taking it to sewer plants next week. In April, state environmental regulators gave Marcellus Shale drillers until May 19 to voluntarily stop bringing the salty, chemical-laden waste fluids to 15 treatment plants that cannot remove all of the contaminants before discharging it into state waterways. On Thursday, Environmental Protection Agency mid-Atlantic Regional Administrator Shawn M. Garvin told the drillers - Atlas Resources, Talisman Energy USA, Range Resources, Cabot Oil and Gas, Shell and Chesapeake Energy - to submit detailed information on both current and anticipated wastewater handling practices by May 25 and again each quarter until June 30, 2012. Some of those operators had already stopped taking some or all of the fluids to plants that discharge into state waterways by the end of 2010 as they increasingly recycled or reused the waste, according to state records. Other operators continued to rely heavily on surface discharges.

Support for natural gas tax, regulation shown hearing in Bethlehem

LEHIGH VALLEY EXPRESS TIMES At a hearing Thursday in Bethlehem, the state House Democratic Policy Committee heard strong support for greater environmental protections and an impact fee on natural gas drilling. The hearing, at town hall, was the third hearing the committee has held on Marcellus Shale

drilling as it determines support for greater regulations on the industry. The committee, which Thursday included 12 state legislators, includes several sponsors of a bill that would institute a 6 percent severance tax on natural gas drilling. State Rep. Greg Vitali, D-Delaware, said his bill would raise \$200 million this year and would generate \$420 million annually by 2015-16. A running clock posted on an overhead screen during the hearing showed a delay on such a tax has cost the state \$185.9 million. Committee members said every natural gas drilling state has a severance tax except Pennsylvania. The proposed 6 percent tax would be about mid-range compared to other states, they said. Vitali's bill would split the tax revenue into thirds, with one-third going to municipalities where natural gas extraction is occurring, one-third for environmental regulation and one-third for the state's general fund. The general fund money could help make up recently reduced education and social services funding, Vitali said.

Fracking video gives a catchy lesson on Marcellus Shale drilling

HARRISBURG PATRIOT-NEWS A New York University journalism class' "explainer" website has released a catchy video on hydraulic fracturing -- better known as fracking. The site notes that the video is just a starting point on learning about the process to get gas out of the Marcellus Shale. When oil and gas companies developed the technology to pump water, chemicals and sand into the ground to fracture rock and release hydrocarbons, they called it "hydraulic fracturing." "Fracking" became the shorthand phrase, helped along by its similarity to an expletive and its affinity with drilling. Despite the ubiquity of the phrase, there is widespread misunderstanding of what the process really is and what its dangers might really be. Edwin Drake was operating in the relative shallows when he drilled his well outside Titusville in 1858 and struck oil. His successors drilled deeper elsewhere and struck gas. In both instances, and for years afterward, they were tapping pools of oil and gas that had accumulated in geologic pockets -- in the case of gas, that which had migrated from its source rock into more porous rock nearby. They were picking the low-hanging fruit, which over time became scarce. Nearly 100 years after Drake, Stanolind Oil and Halliburton performed the first hydraulic fracturing of a well outside Duncan, Okla., on St. Patrick's Day in 1949. The idea was to crack open more of that porous rock and release more gas.

Lieutenant governor visits gas well on 'fact-finding' trip

WILLIAMSPORT SUN-GAZETTE LEROY TOWNSHIP - Lt. Gov. Jim Cawley, who also chairs the Governor's Advisory Commission on the Marcellus Shale, inspected the Chesapeake Energy well site here Thursday - the scene of a massive fracking fluid spill last month. Following a tour of the site, and a first-hand look at the equipment at the wellhead that failed, Cawley questioned Chesapeake officials about the environmental damage to the streams, such as Towanda Creek, that sits downhill from the spill, and was told there had been "no measurable impact." After emphasizing the importance of the burgeoning industry to the state's economy, Cawley said it is important to put safeguards in place to prevent such incidents in the future. Cawley said he has had ongoing discussions with the Department of Environmental Protection secretary Michael Krancer and industry representatives to also minimize the impacts of the spill on the Commonwealth's waterways.

Lt. Gov. Cawley Tours Frack Fluid Spill Site

WNEP-TV (Video) The lieutenant governor toured a gas well in Bradford County Thursday, the same one that leaked thousands of gallons of drilling fluid last month into nearby farm land. The governor tapped his lieutenant, Jim Cawley, to head up a commission that is looking into the gas industry's impact on the state. So Cawley stepped foot on the very Chesapeake gas well near Canton which spewed fluid and natural gas until it was capped to find out what went wrong. Lieutenant Governor Cawley was on what he called a fact-finding mission at the Chesapeake gas well east of Canton. Last month Chesapeake Energy said a piece of equipment broke, sending nearly 10,000 gallons of drilling fluid high in salt content into nearby farm land and Towanda Creek. It took days to bring the well under control. The lieutenant governor told reporters he will do what it takes to prevent that sort of thing from happening again, but added the blow-out did not seem to cause any major environmental impacts. "Obviously salts,

barium, strontium, all of those, so far no real measurable increases in any of those," Cawley said of the contents of the fracking fluid.

Texas could lead way in gas drilling disclosure

ASSOCIATED PRESS HOUSTON -- Texas is poised to become the first state to require gas drillers to publicly disclose the chemicals they use to release natural gas from tight rock formations, a measure that could set the stage for other states and Congress to move ahead with their own initiatives to regulate hydraulic fracturing. But environmentalists caution the bill, while a step in the right direction, remains too protective of industry. "It's a glass half full kind of thing, pretty good job, pretty good legislation, but we didn't go far enough," said Cyrus Reed, conservation director of the Sierra Club's Lone Star chapter....The EPA, meanwhile, "is calling on industry to be more transparent about the use of fracking chemicals," spokeswoman Betsaida Alcantara said in an email. For a national study on the issue, it has requested the information from nine major drillers, all of whom have complied. Yet there are no rules in place requiring disclosure. That's why Texas' effort is encouraging to some. "If you've got the industry supporting something in Texas and they're putting stuff on a website, it's got to spur things in other states," said Reed of the Sierra Club.

Blog: Delaware Commission Delays Permit for Frack Water Withdrawal

AMERICAN RIVERS The fight continues for America's™ Most Endangered River of 2010, the Upper Delaware. Yesterday, the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) unanimously voted to postpone a decision on a water withdrawal permit for fracking in the Marcellus Shale. The permit was proposed by XTO Energy, a subsidiary of ExxonMobil. DRBC had received 7100 emails and another couple hundred letters (as of last night) asking them to delay this decision and allow time for additional public comment. DRBC will keep the public record open from now through to a public hearing to be held in the Broome County, NY region within 30 days (date and location to be determined). DRBC is developing natural gas regulations and is not issuing any drilling permits in the meantime. Therefore, XTO has no need for the water at the moment. "People rallied to stop ExxonMobil's™ water grab and to protect Oquaga Creek, a beautiful trout stream in the headwaters of the Delaware River. The Commission members heard the people's™ voice and relented, tabling action on the proposed permit. This is what the public can do when they organize with a unified voice. Thank you to all who spoke up," said Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper.

PENNSYLVANIA

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

Marcellus Shale drillers balk at EPA pressure on state to tighten wastewater disposal rules The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on Thursday stepped up pressure on Pennsylvania regulators to tighten wastewater disposal standards for natural gas drillers, a federal assertion of authority that rubbed the Marcellus Shale industry the wrong way. The EPA directed the six biggest Marcellus Shale natural gas operators to disclose how and where they recycle or dispose of drilling wastewater in the region. Those companies have promised to abide by a call from Pennsylvania's top environmental regulator to stop sending their wastewater to 15 treatment plants by Thursday. The letter from EPA Regional Administrator Shawn M. Garvin to Michael Krancer, secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, implies that Krancer's voluntary directive to the industry is insufficient. "While we appreciate PA DEP's effort to reduce oil and gas wastewater discharges to Pennsylvania's waters, we believe modifications to the prior wastewater disposal practices should be legally enforceable to the greatest extent

possible," Garvin said.

City property owners, water department reach deal on storm water fees A group of city property owners has reached an agreement with the Philadelphia Water Department to provide relief from skyrocketing fees for storm-water management, the department and the business group said Thursday. The Proposed Storm Water Assistance Program would cap fee hikes at 10 percent annually for two years on about 1,500 nonresidential properties that are slated to have a monthly increase of at least \$100 each starting July 1. The proposal, which would provide an estimated \$13.6 million in relief, is subject to a 30-day comment period after the Water Department advertises the proposed change in its regulations Friday or Monday, said Joanne Dahme, the department's public affairs manager. "We are going to do everything we can to make this happen," Dahme said. "Our goal is to have it in place on July 1."

State stocking ponds with voracious fish to go after insects They're small fish - only tadpole-size - but they have voracious appetites. They can eat several times' their weight every day. And their favorite food? Mosquito larvae. That puts *Gambusia affinis* up there with the dog as one of man's best friends. The state Department of Environmental Protection is stocking many of New Jersey's lakes and ponds with thousands of them and other insect-gobbling species. By the end of this spring, the state will have delivered three million fish in the course of the 20-year-old program overseen by the state's Mosquito Control Commission and the Bureau of Fresh Water Fisheries. The fish are raised as "bio-control agents" at the state's Charles O. Hayford Hatchery in Hackettstown, and offered to the counties at no cost. *G. affinis* will be joined in the coming battle by other species: *Pimephales promelas*, *Fundulus diaphanous*, *Lepomis macrochirus*, *Lepomis gibbosus*, fathead minnows, freshwater killifish and pumpkinseed sunfish. The fish "can be more effective than pesticides," said Bob Kent, administrator of the DEP's Office of Mosquito Control Coordination. "Insecticides require multiple applications every mosquito season. The right fish can eliminate or greatly reduce the need for any applications at all," Kent said. The effectiveness of the fish stems partly from their reproductive habits, said Claudia O'Malley, the office's technical adviser. They can reproduce at just six weeks of age and propagate once a month.

The 4-1-1 on fracking: J-school class produces shale drilling Who, what, where, when, why and what's up with that fracking? A New York University journalism class delivers a YouTube take on deep well gas drilling hip-hop style. The animated video explains the hydrofracturing - or fracking - process now underway in large swaths of Pennsylvania in the Marcellus Shale region. (New York state, the northern end of the shale region, has not yet approved shale drilling amid ongoing debate about the environmental impacts.) The video's title - "My Water's on Fire Tonight." - is sure to touch off some sparks in the industry which disputes claims that shale drilling make water flammable.

Blog; Online cuties: More baby birds! They can hardly lift their little heads. Mostly, they lie there, breathing heavily and squirming. The two hatchling bluebirds in the nest that the Pennsylvania Game Commission has on a live video stream have just come into the world. Three more eggs are still to go. Every now and then an adult comes in to the next box and more or less obscures the view with feathers. But the action is sure to increase in coming days, as the little ones grow and start to get more insistent on being fed. So it's another view of the ongoing springtime saga of birth ... and humans getting addicted to watching them. Wildlife web cams are booming, and nesting birds make good subjects because they stay in one spot. Launched in 2009, the bluebird camera was the agency's first foray into the arena of live nest cams. It provides a color, infrared video feed. And, unlike most, it also includes audio. I couldn't hear anything just now, but I'm betting those little guys will get noisy soon!

Blog: "Coal Cares" campaign: With cute inhalers??? Ostensibly, the press release was from coal giant Peabody Energy. Supposedly, in honor of Asthma Awareness Month, the company was starting a "Coal Cares" campaign and was going to distribute asthma inhalers to children living within 200 miles of a coal plant, along with \$10 coupons to be used for actual asthma medication. The inhalers were themed to My Little Pony, Elmo, SpongeBob, Dora the Explorer, Harry Potter and "the Bieber." There was even a "My First Inhaler" for toddlers. Purportedly, the president even released an anti-bullying statement: "Too many young Americans face daily schoolyard taunting

and bullying because of a condition over which they have no control. By re-branding the inhaler as a cool, individualized, must-have accessory, Coal Cares[®] will empower children to tell bullies: "suck it up."™ You may have run across it via a vigorous Twitter and Facebook effort with, as of a few minutes ago, 18,641 people recommending the site. Actually, this was a hoax by a new group, Coal Kills Kids, an effort of the Yes Lab, an activist training center associated with the Yes Men. A few news outlets blew their cover. And today, the Poynter Institute, a school and career builder that fosters excellence in journalism, looked into the situation in an online report. A Coal Kills Kids spokesman told Poynter reporter Matthew Palevsky that the website was produced by "concerned individuals who wanted to do something to highlight the point that pollution that comes from coal plants hurts kids. Something that wasn't doom and gloom."

PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE

Murphy again pushing bill to open offshore drilling, enhance revenue WASHINGTON -- Resurrecting a bill he introduced in the last Congress, Rep. Tim Murphy, R-Upper St. Clair, thinks he can navigate the shrill, partisan lawmaking body with an energy plan. This week, Capitol lawmakers are scrambling to appeal to constituents concerned about soaring gasoline prices. House Republicans passed a pair of bills to promote offshore oil drilling, while Senate Democrats in a hearing Thursday grilled oil company executives on their bloated profits and taxpayer subsidies. Mr. Murphy's bill, introduced Thursday, would open up offshore drilling for oil and natural gas in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans and parts of the Gulf of Mexico not already open to drillers, and expedite the permitting for new wells. It would use the proceeds to fund badly needed infrastructure priorities, promote clean energy and pay down the debt.

PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE REVIEW

Residents seek assurance on nuke cleanup in Parks As the Army Corps of Engineers gets ready to excavate and remove radiological and chemically contaminated dirt and debris from the nuclear waste dump along Route 66 in Parks Township, nearby residents want reassurances that they will be safe. The cleanup is expected to take eight to 10 years. About 50 residents attended a Corps public meeting last night at the Parks Township Volunteer Fire Department on Dalmatian Drive. "You're exposing a lot of soil," said Larry Golofski, who lives in the Kiski Highlands housing plan near the dump and says he works in the nuclear industry. "We have conditions here that are very much wet and very dry," he said. "When nuclear particles get airborne when it's dry, it's difficult." Army Corps officials tried to allay fears, stressing that only a small amount of radiological material will be excavated at any one time. The dump's 10 disposal trenches will be dug out in steps to make testing easier and to prevent spread of the contamination. This summer, the Corps and its contractor, Cabrera Services Inc., plan to begin excavation on two of 10 trenches dug in the 1960s for disposal of radioactive and chemical waste generated from the former Nuclear Materials and Equipment Corp (NUMEC). The current site owner is BWX Technologies.

Drilling rises to top of Frazer concerns The two men running for Frazer supervisor recognize that Marcellus shale natural gas drilling is a hot topic around town. Neither is in any hurry to change the way the township has addressed the issue. According to Supervisor and Township Secretary Lori Ziencik, Frazer restricts drilling to its residential/agricultural and industrial zoning districts. Beyond that, the township does little to regulate the industry. "From what I hear, there are a lot of concerns about gas well drilling," said Bryan Galecki. "I'll need to do some research on that before I take office." He indicated that unless homeowners report water problems or other environmental dangers, he's hesitant to suggest any ordinance changes. Galecki and fellow Democrat Matt Beacom are seeking nomination in Tuesday's primary. There will be one open seat. Supervisor Christine Heintzinger isn't seeking re-election. "If somebody owns a property, that's their right to put a well there," said Beacom, whose grandfather, Jim Beacom, served on the board.

State asks EPA to extend sale of winter gasoline The state has asked the federal Environmental Protection Agency for a temporary waiver to permit gasoline wholesalers to continue to sell a winter blend of gas in Southwestern Pennsylvania because five terminals in the region are either low or out of summer-blend gas. Deliveries of summer-

blend have been delayed by five-to-seven days because of conversions by the refineries from a winter to summer blend, disruptions in a pipeline and outages at eastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey refineries, state Department of Environmental Protection Secretary Michael Krancer said in a letter to the EPA on Thursday. The state is asking that terminals in Allegheny, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Washington and Westmoreland counties be permitted to continue to sell the winter blend of gasoline until May 31, "to curtail and/or avoid temporary supply distributions, fuel shortages and their impact," Krancer wrote. The pipeline deliveries from eastern Pennsylvania to the Pittsburgh region is not expected to be sufficient until mid-to-late May, Krancer said. "They're trying to get the 7.8 RVP fuel in and it's just not happening fast enough. Some stations have had to alternate hours" of operation, said Nancy Maricondi, executive director of the Petroleum Retailers and Repair Association in Forest Hills. The supply of winter-blend gas is sufficient, but suppliers are not supposed to deliver that after May 1, said Maricondi, whose trade group represents over 250 service stations and repair shops.

Indiana County Commissioners seek *Marcellus* drilling guidance The Indiana County Board of Commissioners would like to see increased guidance from the state when it comes to dealing with issues involving Marcellus Shale drilling at the county level. The commissioners met Tuesday with Robert Johnson, deputy director of Gov. Tom Corbett's Southwest Office, which serves Indiana County. The commissioners met with Johnson to discuss a number of topics, including natural gas drilling in the Marcellus Shale. Interest in that topic flared up at an April 13 commissioners' meeting when members of the public came to either support or oppose a proposal by MDS Energy to drill for natural gas near Yellow Creek State Park. The site in question was located within a conservation zone, in which gas drilling requires a special permit according to a county ordinance. Last week, the Indiana County Zoning Hearing Board denied the MDS proposal but invited the company to re-apply for a permit, citing specific conditions that would need to be met for the permit's approval.

Drilling rises to top of Frazer concerns The two men running for supervisor recognize that Marcellus shale natural gas drilling is a hot topic around town. Neither is in any hurry to change the way the township has addressed the issue.

Symposium to look at economy, equity, environment The Second Annual Yough Country Symposium -- "Reaching Sustainability" -- will take place from May 20-22 at various locations in Connellsville.

North Huntingdon to limit gas well drilling After more discussion during a public hearing Thursday, North Huntingdon commissioners indicated they expect to vote in June on a proposed amendment to the zoning ordinance concerning gas well drilling.

Growth an issue of control vs. sprawl in commissioners' race Butler County is the only county in Southwestern Pennsylvania to gain population, Census 2010 data shows, meaning those elected county commissioners will have to deal with growth

PITTSBURGH BUSINESS TIMES

Blog: EPA asks 6 drillers, DEP, for wastewater info The Environmental Protection Agency flexed another muscle today in its back and forth with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection over who is better at protecting water from natural gas extraction activities. Besides ordering Tunnelton Liquids Co. to stop injecting oil and gas wastewater into a mine where it also disposes of treated acid mine drainage, the EPA also sent letters to Range Resources, Cabot Oil & Gas, Atlas Resources (now Chevron), Talisman Energy USA, Chesapeake Energy and SWEPI (Shell's E&P company), requesting information about well locations, pits, lagoons, impoundments, amount of wastewater, disposal, reuse, treatment, and recycling by May 25. The EPA is also requesting that the information be submitted every quarter starting July 1, and for these operators to "identify any and all discharges or releases of any substances, wastes, and/or gas extraction wastewater from facilities that contain wells that you own or operate and all media (air, water, or land) that were affected by such discharges or releases and the estimated quantities of all substances discharged or released for the past five years."

SCRANTON TIMES-TRIBUNE

EPA directs six drillers to disclose waste plans Federal environmental regulators have directed six of the most active natural gas drillers in Pennsylvania to disclose how and where they plan to treat or dispose of their wastewater once they comply with a state request to stop taking it to sewer plants next week. In April, state environmental regulators gave Marcellus Shale drillers until May 19 to voluntarily stop bringing the salty, chemical-laden waste fluids to 15 treatment plants that cannot remove all of the contaminants before discharging it into state waterways. On Thursday, Environmental Protection Agency mid-Atlantic Regional Administrator Shawn M. Garvin told the drillers - Atlas Resources, Talisman Energy USA, Range Resources, Cabot Oil and Gas, Shell and Chesapeake Energy - to submit detailed information on both current and anticipated wastewater handling practices by May 25 and again each quarter until June 30, 2012. Some of those operators had already stopped taking some or all of the fluids to plants that discharge into state waterways by the end of 2010 as they increasingly recycled or reused the waste, according to state records. Other operators continued to rely heavily on surface discharges.

GETTYSBURG TIMES

First Pa. Children's Water Festival flows into Gettysburg College On May 24, approximately 1,630 4th and 5th grade students, their teachers and chaperons, and over 300 volunteers will participate in the first Pennsylvania Children's Water Festival at Gettysburg College in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Sixty-eight classes of students will be coming from schools in Adams and York counties, including Lincoln Elementary, Conewago Valley Intermediate, Bendersville Elementary, Fairfield Area Middle, St. Joseph Elementary, Littlestown Christian Academy, Manheim Elementary, West Manheim Elementary, Park Hills Elementary, Baresville Elementary, St. Francis Xavier, Annunciation BVM, Hanover Middle, and Alloway Creek Intermediate. The 2011 Children's Water Festival is modeled after the internationally-acclaimed Children's Groundwater Festival. At the Festival, students will explore the "History of Water in Pennsylvania" through dynamic and interactive activities, learn about drinking water, groundwater, watersheds, surface water, and water quality topics in engaging presentations, and gain a better understanding of their water supply and greater appreciation for what a truly precious resource water is. All students will attend a performance by Grammy Award-winning environmental singer and songwriter Tom Chapin. Activities will be led by water and natural resource experts from local, state, and national organizations...One example of an activity is Edible Aquifers. This indoor activity, presented by EPA personnel from Washington, D.C., and the Region III office in Philadelphia, teaches children about the geologic formations in an aquifer. Students construct confining layers, contamination, recharge, discharge, and water tables out of ice cream, soda, sprinkles, and other tasty treats.

DELAWARE COUNTY DAILY TIMES

Guest column: Taxpayer: Corbett drilling Pa. residents When Tom Corbett assumed residency at the governor's mansion in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania's collective priority list became dramatically reordered. Values long upheld by citizens on both sides of the partisan divide were dismissed with shocking plutocratic abandon. "We need to do the hard cutting so the tree can once again bear fruit," said the freshman governor. Only problem with that, Tom, the tree you mention stands dying in a radioactive cesspool of "hydrofracking" fluid. Protecting the environment, providing an adequate public education system for our children "these concepts have been a mainstay in Pennsylvania politics for decades, but no longer. Yes, Mr. Corbett, voters did, by way of the ballot box, authorize you to rein in swollen deficits" just not at the expense of already underfunded schools and universities, or the safety of citizens, the health of rivers and forests.

UPPER SAUCON PATCH

Gas Drillers Are Willing to Pay Tax, Legislators Say House Democratic Policy Committee Holds Fracking Hearing at Bethlehem's Town Hall. Not only are natural gas industry leaders willing to pay a tax for fracking in Pennsylvania, they have already budgeted to do so, the chairman of the House Democratic Policy Committee told those gathered at Bethlehem Town Hall this afternoon for a hearing on Marcellus Shale. Rep. Michael Sturla of Lancaster County said industry leaders have, during testimony in front of his committee, said they would not leave

Pennsylvania even if the state's fracking tax is 1 percent higher than the highest gas drilling tax in the country. "Frankly, they have been more forthcoming than some of our politicians who have said (the industry) would leave," Sturla said. "I don't think it's the industry that's the bad guy. It's other people who are standing in the way."

LEHIGH VALLEY EXPRESS TIMES

Support for natural gas tax, regulation shown hearing in Bethlehem At a hearing Thursday in Bethlehem, the state House Democratic Policy Committee heard strong support for greater environmental protections and an impact fee on natural gas drilling. The hearing, at town hall, was the third hearing the committee has held on Marcellus Shale drilling as it determines support for greater regulations on the industry. The committee, which Thursday included 12 state legislators, includes several sponsors of a bill that would institute a 6 percent severance tax on natural gas drilling. State Rep. Greg Vitali, D-Delaware, said his bill would raise \$200 million this year and would generate \$420 million annually by 2015-16. A running clock posted on an overhead screen during the hearing showed a delay on such a tax has cost the state \$185.9 million. Committee members said every natural gas drilling state has a severance tax except Pennsylvania. The proposed 6 percent tax would be about mid-range compared to other states, they said. Vitali's bill would split the tax revenue into thirds, with one-third going to municipalities where natural gas extraction is occurring, one-third for environmental regulation and one-third for the state's general fund. The general fund money could help make up recently reduced education and social services funding, Vitali said.

WILLIAMSPORT SUN-GAZETTE

Lieutenant governor visits gas well on 'fact-finding' trip LEROY TOWNSHIP - Lt. Gov. Jim Cawley, who also chairs the Governor's Advisory Commission on the Marcellus Shale, inspected the Chesapeake Energy well site here Thursday - the scene of a massive fracking fluid spill last month. Following a tour of the site, and a first-hand look at the equipment at the wellhead that failed, Cawley questioned Chesapeake officials about the environmental damage to the streams, such as Towanda Creek, that sits downhill from the spill, and was told there had been "no measurable impact." After emphasizing the importance of the burgeoning industry to the state's economy, Cawley said it is important to put safeguards in place to prevent such incidents in the future. Cawley said he has had ongoing discussions with the Department of Environmental Protection secretary Michael Krancer and industry representatives to also minimize the impacts of the spill on the Commonwealth's waterways.

WNEP-TV

Lt. Gov. Cawley Tours Frack Fluid Spill Site (Video) The lieutenant governor toured a gas well in Bradford County Thursday, the same one that leaked thousands of gallons of drilling fluid last month into nearby farm land. The governor tapped his lieutenant, Jim Cawley, to head up a commission that is looking into the gas industry's impact on the state. So Cawley stepped foot on the very Chesapeake gas well near Canton which spewed fluid and natural gas until it was capped to find out what went wrong. Lieutenant Governor Cawley was on what he called a fact-finding mission at the Chesapeake gas well east of Canton. Last month Chesapeake Energy said a piece of equipment broke, sending nearly 10,000 gallons of drilling fluid high in salt content into nearby farm land and Towanda Creek. It took days to bring the well under control. The lieutenant governor told reporters he will do what it takes to prevent that sort of thing from happening again, but added the blow-out did not seem to cause any major environmental impacts. "Obviously salts, barium, strontium, all of those, so far no real measurable increases in any of those," Cawley said of the contents of the fracking fluid.

HARRISBURG PATRIOT NEWS

Fracking video gives a catchy lesson on Marcellus Shale drilling A New York University journalism class' "explainer" website has released a catchy video on hydraulic fracturing -- better known as fracking. The site notes that the video is just a starting point on learning about the process to get gas out of the Marcellus Shale. When oil and gas companies developed the technology to pump water, chemicals and sand into the ground to fracture rock and release hydrocarbons, they called it "hydraulic fracturing." "Fracking" became the shorthand

phrase, helped along by its similarity to an expletive and its affinity with drilling. Despite the ubiquity of the phrase, there is widespread misunderstanding of what the process really is and what its dangers might really be. Edwin Drake was operating in the relative shallows when he drilled his well outside Titusville in 1858 and struck oil. His successors drilled deeper elsewhere and struck gas. In both instances, and for years afterward, they were tapping pools of oil and gas that had accumulated in geologic pockets -- in the case of gas, that which had migrated from its source rock into more porous rock nearby. They were picking the low-hanging fruit, which over time became scarce. Nearly 100 years after Drake, Stanolind Oil and Halliburton performed the first hydraulic fracturing of a well outside Duncan, Okla., on St. Patrick's Day in 1949. The idea was to crack open more of that porous rock and release more gas.

ERIE TIMES-NEWS

Erie National Wildlife Refuge holds 'Trash to Treasure' contest GUYS MILLS -- The Erie National Wildlife Refuge is inviting people to turn discarded items into something useful or beautiful. Refuge officials are holding a "Trash to Treasure" contest that will award cash prizes in four age categories. The winners will be announced during the annual Summer Fest on June 25. Contest participants must rework items that would normally be recycled or discarded into either useful or artistic creations. Entry deadline is June 13. For more information, contact the refuge at (814) 789-3585.

STATE COLLEGE CENTRE DAILY TIMES

Leaders want Pa. surplus spent STATE COLLEGE -- A dozen organization leaders and education advocates gathered in the borough municipal building Thursday to call for the state government to spend a \$500 million surplus now. Opened umbrellas sat at the front of a conference room, with several speakers noting that "it's raining now" in central Pennsylvania, a reference to the state's "rainy day" funds. The leaders also called for a tax on Marcellus Shale natural gas drilling and spoke against proposed cuts in education funding. Brian Griffith, Penns Valley Area School District superintendent, said budget cuts will slow progress his district has made. The district has already had to reduce staff 13 percent over the last two years. "It is impacting our students," he said. Kelly Hastings, superintendent for the Keystone Central School District, is in her first year on the job, and said she doesn't want to be the superintendent who has to "tear apart" the district's good work.

YORK DAILY RECORD

Gettysburg to honor treatment plant York, PA - Members of the Gettysburg Municipal Authority will host a ceremonial groundbreaking at 10:30 a.m. today at 601 E. Middle St. in Gettysburg to honor the upgrades and expansion of the Gettysburg Wastewater Treatment Plant. The \$18 million project will replace equipment in use since 1985 with state-of-the-art processes that will support development and bring the facility into compliance with environmental regulations that protect the Chesapeake Bay.

DELAWARE

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL

New federal bill would protect more of White Clay watershed The protected area of the White Clay Creek watershed would be expanded under legislation Sen. Chris Coons, D-Del., and Rep. Joe Pitts, R-Pa., introduced Thursday. It would add about nine miles of the creek and its tributaries to the existing "Wild and Scenic Rivers" designation for the waterway. "It's up to all of us to fight to protect our natural resources," said Coons, whose grandmother donated land along the creek for protection. The bill would add sections of two streams that were omitted from the designation, including a 1.6-mile stretch of Lamborn Run in New Castle County and a 7.4-mile stretch of stream in Pennsylvania's New Garden Township. Sens. Tom Carper, D-Del., and Bob Casey, D-Pa., and

Rep. John Carney, D-Del., are co-sponsors. Congress designated White Clay Creek and its tributaries as part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System in 2000. The watershed is home to many species of wildlife. The creek is stocked with trout for fishing and the land offers recreation for hikers, bikers, birders and hunters.

WASHINGTON D.C.

WASHINGTON POST

U.S. to raise fuel efficiency standards, but by how much? As the first Toyota Priuses took to U.S. roads more than a decade ago and celebrities such as Leonardo DiCaprio and Cameron Diaz touted their virtues, enthusiasts predicted that hybrid cars would quickly become mainstream. But there was a problem: They cost too much, and consumers spurned them. Last year, the vehicles represented less than 3 percent of cars and light trucks sold in the United States. Now the Obama administration is deciding how much to push U.S. drivers into fuel-efficient cars. Over the next few months, regulators are scheduled to set the next round of U.S. fuel economy standards for manufacturers. Among the proposals under consideration is one that would lift average fuel economy under the law to as much as 62 mpg by 2025. The preeminent issue in the debate is how much the price of cars â€” gas, hybrids, plug-ins or whatever inventors come up withâ€” would rise if regulations dictate such standards.

To Greenlanders, global warming's not all bad NUUK, Greenland â€” Few places on Earth have seen starker changes in weather than this icebound island straddling the Arctic Circle. With that in mind, Americaâ€™s top diplomat arrived here this week intent on calling attention to the perils of climate change. The problem was that Greenlanders arenâ€™t exactly complaining. In fact, as Secretary of State of Hillary Rodham Clinton toured snow-covered fjords on Thursday, there were awkward reminders of Greenlandâ€™s embrace of the rise in temperatures that began two decades ago. Rather than questioning global warming, many of this islandâ€™s 60,000 inhabitants seem to be racing to cash in. The tiny capital of Nuuk is bracing for record numbers of visitors this year; the retreating sea ice means a longer tourist season and more cruise ships from the United States. Hunters are boasting of more and bigger caribou, and the annual cod migration is starting earlier and lasting longer. In the far south, farmers are trying their hand at an exotic form of agriculture: growing vegetables. â€œBefore, the growing season was too short for vegetables,â€ said Noah Melgaard, a local journalist. â€œNow it is getting longer each year.â€

WEST VIRGINIA

CHARLESTON GAZETTE

Blog: EPA seeks more details on drilling waste disposal The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency just announced:

Massey settles Sierra Club lawsuit CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- Massey Energy has agreed to donate \$400,000 to a West Virginia University College of Law conservation project to resolve a water pollution lawsuit filed last year by the Sierra Club. The deal includes new compliance requirements and sets up a schedule of automatic fines Massey would have to pay for future violations, according to legal documents. A copy of the settlement was submitted Wednesday to U.S. District Judge John T. Copenhaver in Charleston. The Sierra Club and three other groups sued Massey last April, alleging thousands of violations of Clean Water Act permit limits. The suit alleged that Massey was continuing to violate such limits, despite a \$20 million pollution settlement with federal regulators. A settlement has been in the work for months, and the deal was submitted to Copenhaver just weeks before Massey is scheduled to be bought out by Alpha Natural Resources. The deal is similar to one reached last September, in which

CONSOL Energy agreed to spend \$1.2 million to create a water pollution and land protection legal clinic at the law school.

Blog: New National Academy study outlines “pressing need for substantial action” on global warming
Here’s the conclusion from a new report issued today by the National Academy of Sciences: Climate change is occurring, is very likely caused by human activities, and poses significant risks for a broad range of human and natural systems. Each additional ton of greenhouse gases emitted commits us to further change and greater risks...

Blog: More proof about combustible dust dangers, but still no regulations from Obama’s OSHA On January 31, 2011 a fatal flash fire at Hoeganaes Corporation fatally injured a one worker and seriously burned as another. The facility produces powdered iron and is located about twenty miles outside of Nashville, Tenn. Photo from U.S. Chemical Safety Board. There’s a new update out this week from the U.S. Chemical Safety Board that...

Blog: Mountain Party’s Baber urges transition from coal “what about the other candidates?” Photo from Bob Henry Baber’s website. The Mountain Party’s Bob Henry Baber isn’t on the ballot for Saturday’s special gubernatorial primary here in West Virginia. That’s because the Mountain Party selected its candidate in a party convention. But Baber will be on the ballot in November’s general election. On coal issues, the first statement you see from Baber

Blog: Arch Coal’s safety testimony under fire It was interesting enough that Arch Coal vice president for safety Tony Bumbico thought calling for a voluntary safety program in the coal industry was a good idea. But then he decided to criticize the idea of offering more protections to coal miners who object to unsafe working conditions. And it looks like Bumbico picked...

CHARLESTON DAILY MAIL

Editorial: Of course coal mining creates wealth in W.Va. On Wednesday, West Virginia Chamber of Commerce President Steve Roberts and Reps. Shelley Moore Capito and Nick Joe Rahall appeared before the House subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment in Washington, D.C. The panel was taking comment on the Obama administration's policy toward coal, specifically surface mining. The administration retroactively revoked the permit for the Spruce #1 Mine after the agency and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers had signed off on it and work was underway. West Virginia's economic interests were well represented. Among the facts that emerged:

WHEELING INTELLIGENCER

Area Residents Check Out 'Fracking Facts' at Library Heavy truck traffic and the roaring of compressor motors are some of the challenges awaiting those living in areas with active natural gas drilling. "You've got these huge diesel motors roaring all the time," said Wetzel County Action Group member Ed Wade of the motors found at gas compressor stations in his county. Wade and fellow group members Bill Hughes and Steve Conlon spoke to about 50 people Thursday during the Ohio County Public Library's first "Fracking Facts" session. With Marcellus Shale drilling becoming more prevalent in Ohio and Brooke counties after beginning in Wetzel County about four years ago, Wade, Hughes and Conlon said Ohio County residents can expect to see more changes. "As long as the rig is drilling, the trucks are running," Wade said, noting many trucks carry huge tanks of water, sand and chemicals, while others carry compressor engines, pipe or other materials. "These roads are very narrow and are just not made for this type of traffic," Hughes added, noting his wife now refuses to drive on the roads.

PARKERSBURG NEWS-SENTINEL

Blog: Max Power for Marcellus Shale! "There's the right way. The wrong way and the Max Power way! The Max Power way is just the wrong way, but faster." That's from an episode of The Simpsons, the one where Homer changes his name to Max Power. That line could just as well apply to lawmakers and overseers with regard to Marcellus Shale drilling. They sure seem to be in Max Power mode.

WEST VIRGINIA STATE JOURNAL

Fracking Issues Addressed at Seminar in Wheeling WHEELING -- Residents interested in learning more about the fracking process in Marcellus Shale drilling attended a meeting at the Ohio County Public Library Thursday night. This is the first of three meetings on the issue. Resident learned about the fracking process, first hand, from those that live near drilling sites. Members of the Wetzel County Action Group described their four years of experience in natural gas extraction including site preparation, traffic issues, drilling, fracking, compressor stations and completion.

WEST VIRGINIA PUBLIC BROADCASTING

WV Wildflower Pilgrimage celebrates 50 years Walk through the woods this time of year and you'll notice purple, yellow and white blossoms unfolding on the forest floor. It's the season when wildflowers start their annual show in West Virginia, and also the season for the annual Wildflower Pilgrimage at Blackwater Falls State Park.

WEST VIRGINIA METRO NEWS

EPA Gets Involved in Marcellus Shale Drilling The federal Environmental Protection Agency has asked several Pennsylvania companies involved in drilling for natural gas in the Marcellus Shale to provide information on water used in the drilling process. On Thursday, the EPA directed six natural gas drillers in Pennsylvania to give details on how and where they get rid of or recycle water used in the fracking process. Among the companies named in the EPA release is Chesapeake Energy, which does a significant amount of drilling in West Virginia. According to an EPA press release, the decision to get involved in Marcellus drilling is to "ensure that natural gas production takes place safely and responsibly." "We want to make sure that the drillers are handling their wastewater in an environmentally responsible manner," said EPA mid-Atlantic Regional Administrator Shawn M. Garvin. The EPA has taken the action after the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection asked drillers to voluntarily stop taking wastewater to state treatment plants by May 19. EPA officials say they want to know where drillers will now take wastewater. Companies have until May 25 to report the information to the EPA.

ASSOCIATED PRESS (W. Va.)

Coal-derived fuel bill introduced in Congress CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- Some of the nation's fuels would be required to contain a minimum volume derived from coal under a bill introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives. Republican Rep. Shelley Moore Capito of West Virginia said Thursday that using coal to produce fuels for vehicles, machinery and aircraft would further reduce U.S. reliance on foreign oil. She says it also would create good-paying jobs and increase the nation's energy security. Rep. Nick Rahall, D-W.Va., is a co-sponsor of the bill.

Rockefeller to meet with state farmers MARTINSBURG, W.Va. -- U.S. Sen. Jay Rockefeller has set up a meeting with West Virginia farmers to discuss ways to connect them with new markets. The meeting is scheduled for this afternoon at the Poor House Farm Park near Martinsburg. The meeting is part of...

Wet weather delays crop planting in state CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- Farmers across West Virginia haven't been able to plant their crops because of wet weather. About 45 percent of the total planned acreage has been plowed this year, about half the typical acreage, said Buddy Davidson, spokesman for the ...

Pipeline firm linked to WV creek contamination A natural gas pipeline company says it may be responsible for a contaminant that a Brooke County fisherman found in Buffalo Creek earlier this week. Bentonite - a clay-like substance used in drilling - was also found in the Ohio River.

The Intelligencer reports that MarkWest Liberty Midstream & Resources issued a statement saying it's cooperating with regulators. MarkWest says it had notified Pennsylvania officials about cloudy water in Blaine Township near an area where a contractor had drilled a pipeline borehole. There had been no activity at the site since May 2, but MarkWest says it learned late Tuesday that a foamy substance was reported several miles downstream. The company says it's committed to environmental responsibility. Meanwhile, state environmental officials are testing

water samples for other possible chemicals.

MARYLAND

BALTIMORE SUN

Blog: Solar & Wind Expo this weekend The weekend weather forecast may be calling for some rain, but that won't stop the Solar & Wind Expo from going on Friday through Sunday at the state fairgrounds in Timonium. Gov. Martin O'Malley will host a roundtable discussion of Maryland's energy future on Friday. On Saturday, electric-vehicle advocate Chelsea Sexton, featured in the film "Who Killed the Electric Car?", will deliver the keynote address. There'll also be a bevy of seminars and workshops on home weatherization, the hows and whys of solar, wind, geothermal and more. Doors open at 10 a.m. each day. Tickets are \$12 at the door, with kids under 12 free, and \$2 off if you arrive by light rail, buy online or present any ad or article (including a printout of this one). For details, go here.

Blog: Throwaway bag fee spreads to DC 'burbs Montgomery County's leaders have now done what Baltimore city's and Maryland's have balked at doing - impose a nickel tax on throwaway retail bags to fight litter. On Wednesday (May 11) County Executive Ike Leggett signed the bag-charge bill passed recently by the County Council, saying he hoped the new law would make shoppers more environmentally conscious rather than raise a lot of revenue. It's modeled on the nickel-bag tax that took effect in 2010 in the District of Columbia, which has been credited with substantially reducing disposable bag use and litter there. The Montgomery law, which takes effect Jan. 1, would levy a five-cent tax on almost every paper or plastic carryout bag provided by retail establishments in the county. Exceptions include bags for prescription drugs, newspapers, goods sold at farmers markets and other seasonal vendors' stands and prepared foods or drinks taken from restaurants. Merchants would get a penny back on every bag to help cover their administrative costs.

Native plants are focus of celebrationOCEAN VIEW -- Native plants will be celebrated this weekend during the seventh annual Gardening for the Bays Native Plant Sale, scheduled to take place at James Farm Ecological Preserve.

Coastal Maryland, Virginia could get tidal flooding CRISFIELD -- Tidal departures along coastal sections of the lower Eastern Shore of Maryland and Virginia are expected to exceed normal limits by up to 1.5 feet tonight and Friday, causing minor flooding during high tides, the National Weather Service advises.

SALISBURY DAILY TIMES

WALLOPS ISLAND: Colleges to test rockets at NASA facilityWALLOPS ISLAND, Va. -- Teams from three southeastern colleges will try to launch rockets 10,000 feet in the air from Wallops Island, Va., and survive a water recovery.

Bumper year for berries They're sweet, succulent and ripe for the picking. It's the height of an especially good strawberry season on the Lower Shore in which the right combination of rain and temperatures has led to bumper crops for local growers. A sensitive fruit with a short growing season, strawberries were one of the most important commercial crops on the Lower Shore until the early 1900s. Now, producers say high labor costs and competition from mass producers in Florida and California have reduced the number of local strawberry providers to a few specialty markets.

VIRGINIA

RICHMOND TIMES-DISPATCH

Gas line rupture leads to evacuation in Manchester Richmond firefighters evacuated several blocks in the city's Manchester neighborhood this morning after a contractor accidentally ruptured a natural gas line. No injuries were reported.

41 groups, localities in coalition against uranium mining Opponents of a proposed uranium mine in Southside Virginia now include 41 groups and localities, members announced today. The opponents have formed the Keep the Ban coalition, a reference to their desire that Virginia continue its 29-year moratorium on uranium mining. Virginia Uranium Inc. wants to mine and mill uranium in Pittsylvania County. Uranium fuels nuclear power plants. Among other things, the opponents fear that storms could wash radioactive waste into waters including the Roanoke River. Virginia Uranium says the operation would be well-regulated and would provide more than 300 jobs. The General Assembly is expected to reconsider the uranium-mining ban in 2012.

LYNCHBURG NEWS AND ADVANCE

Construction begins on 6.4-megawatt power plant fueled by landfill gas Work is under way in eastern Henrico County on a 6.4-megawatt power plant fueled by landfill gas. Located at Republic Services Inc.'s Old Dominion Landfill, Fortistar LLC's generating facility will sell the electricity it makes to Old Dominion Electric Cooperative. "Every landfill should have a power project on top of it," said Mark S. Comora, Fortistar's president. The \$12 million to \$15 million plant on the 120-acre landfill on Charles City Road should be operating by November, Comora said at a groundbreaking ceremony Tuesday. Solid waste in landfills contains organic materials that decompose and produce gases, including methane. Landfill gas energy facilities capture the methane, the principal component of natural gas, and burn to run electric generators. "As far as we're concerned, this is a baseload facility," said Jackson E. Reasor, Old Dominion Electric's president and CEO. "It should run consistently, cleanly and safely." The co-op has a 20-year contract for the landfill-gas project's electricity. While not disclosing the cooperative's price for the power, Reasor said, "It fits within the market of what we're paying from other sources." Henrico-based Old Dominion Electric is a generation-and-transmission cooperative providing wholesale power to 11 member electric-distribution cooperatives in Virginia, Maryland and Delaware. Those co-ops in turn serve 1.2 million consumer members.

FREDERICKSBURG FREELANCE STAR

Webb: Repeal ethanol support Sen. Jim Webb, D-Virginia, continues to push for repeal of both a tax credit and a tariff on ethanol. Webb this week joined other senators in proposing an amendment that would eliminate both the tariff and the tax credit. The amendment is on a small-business bill currently before the Senate. Ethanol is a corn-based product that is mixed with the gasoline you put into your car. The government is mandating increasing use of ethanol--a 2007 law requires biofuels to be blended into gasoline, and Americans are expected to pump billions of gallons of ethanol into their cars in the coming years. The tax credit sends 45 cents to refiners for every gallon of ethanol they blend with gasoline, and Webb says it costs the government \$6 billion a year. The tariff is 54 cents per gallon plus a 2.5 percent tax on foreign-produced ethanol shipped to the U.S., and Webb says it makes the U.S. more dependent on foreign oil by increasing the price of ethanol. The tariff rate "puts imported ethanol at a competitive disadvantage against imported oil, which discourages ethanol imports from Brazil, Australia, and India," Webb said in March. "It also encourages oil imports from OPEC countries that enter the U.S. tariff-free." Webb has been trying to eliminate the tax credit and the tariff for some time, and he introduced a similar bill in March. In 2009 he urged the Environmental Protection Agency to examine the effects ethanol subsidies have on other areas of the economy.

MISCELLANEOUS

BNA DAILY ENVIRONMENT REPORT

D.C. Circuit Told EPA Guidance on Ozone Fees Violates Clean Air Act EPA violated the Administrative Procedure Act when it issued guidance in 2010 to exempt some states from collecting fees from polluters in areas with the most severe ozone problems, an attorney for the Natural Resources Defense Council tells the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit during oral arguments. Attorney Paul Cort asks a three-judge panel of the D.C. Circuit to vacate EPA's guidance because it constitutes a rulemaking that should have gone through a public notice-and-comment period. Section 185 of the Clean Air Act requires states to collect fees from polluters in "severe" and "extreme" ozone nonattainment areas for the since-revoked hourly ozone standard. Instead, EPA in 2010 issued guidance allowing states to waive the fees in favor of alternative programs, provided they were no less stringent than Section 185.

House Panel Told EPA Should Consider Cost of Rules for Small Business Representatives from metal foundries, coal ash recycling, and other industries urge Congress to require EPA to conduct thorough analyses of how its rules could indirectly affect smaller businesses. Even when EPA has acted to shield small businesses from its rules—for example, by limiting the scope of its greenhouse gas emissions limits to the largest emitters such as power plants—it has ignored how its actions may have an indirect impact, the industry representatives tell the House Small Business Subcommittee on Oversight, Investigations, and Regulations. While the agency's "tailoring rule" ensures that emissions limits will not directly affect the foundry industry immediately, it will affect [the industry] through increased utility costs and drive up the costs of raw materials, according to Brad Muller, vice-president of marketing for the Charlotte Pipe and Foundry Co.

GREENWIRE

TSCA reforms would give global edge to U.S. industry -- report Strengthening U.S. chemical regulations would stimulate job growth in the U.S. chemical industry, according to a report released today by a coalition of environmental groups and labor unions. The BlueGreen Alliance commissioned the report, which says modernizing the 1976 Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) and creating stricter standards for chemicals would give U.S. companies a competitive edge in global markets. "The U.S. chemical industry is at a crossroads," said the report's author, James Heintz of the Political Economy Research Institute (PERI). "It is growing at an OK clip right now, but there are regulatory changes happening in Europe and Canada that are going to have implications for the markets that are available for the U.S. chemical industry."

BLOOMBERG NEWS SERVICE

Wastewater Information From Pennsylvania Gas Wells Sought by EPA The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has asked six companies that drill for natural gas in Pennsylvania to report where they dispose of or recycle contaminated wastewater from hydraulic fracturing of rock. The companies have until May 25 to disclose water treatment plans, the EPA said today in a statement. The request targets sites at which millions of gallons of water mixed with chemicals are forced underground to break up rock and allow gas to flow. The water that returns to the surface contains toxic chemicals. Pennsylvania said that by May 19, the drillers can no longer treat wastewater at 16 plants that don't meet current standards for removal of dissolved solids, said Kevin Sunday, a spokesman for the state Department of Environmental Protection. "We want to make sure that the drillers are handling their wastewater in an environmentally responsible manner," Shawn Garvin, EPA Mid-Atlantic regional administrator, said in a statement. Pennsylvania requires drillers to report how they treat or dispose of wastewater from gas wells, Sunday said. In the year from July 2009 to July 2010, 96.6 million gallons of wastewater were produced from hydraulic fracturing, he said. The EPA request went to Chevron Corp. (CVX), Talisman Energy Inc. (TLM), Range Resources Inc., Cabot Oil & Gas Corp. (COG), SWEPI LP, and Chesapeake Energy Corp. (CHK). The six companies account for more than half of the natural gas produced in Pennsylvania, according to the EPA. Oklahoma City-based Chesapeake, the most active U.S. natural-gas driller, recycles almost all drilling wastewater

in Pennsylvania at company filtration stations, spokesman Jim Gipson said in an e-mail.

FORBES.COM

Blog; EPA Orders Fracking Drillers To Disclose Disposal Practices Sharpening its focus on drillers that use hydraulic fracturing to extract natural gas from deep shale formations, the Environmental Protection Agency directed six firms drilling in Pennsylvania to disclose what they do with contaminated water produced by their wells. It ordered a seventh firm to stop injecting "frac fluid" and brine it receives from drillers into an abandoned mine near Saltsburg in Indiana County, Pa. "We want to make sure that the drillers are handling their wastewater in an environmentally responsible manner," said EPA mid-Atlantic Regional Administrator Shawn M. Garvin, in a statement issued yesterday. The companies had been taking the produced waters, which contain petroleum and an uncertain array of chemicals, to wastewater treatment plants. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection asked the drillers to halt that practice because the plants are not equipped to treat frac fluids. "EPA wants to know where drillers are now going to dispose of their wastewater and will work with PADEP to ensure EPA has access to this information," the agency stated. "The companies must report back to EPA by May 25 with information on the disposal or recycling of their drilling process water."

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Texas could lead way in gas drilling disclosure HOUSTON -- Texas is poised to become the first state to require gas drillers to publicly disclose the chemicals they use to release natural gas from tight rock formations, a measure that could set the stage for other states and Congress to move ahead with their own initiatives to regulate hydraulic fracturing. But environmentalists caution the bill, while a step in the right direction, remains too protective of industry. "It's a glass half full kind of thing, pretty good job, pretty good legislation, but we didn't go far enough," said Cyrus Reed, conservation director of the Sierra Club's Lone Star chapter.... The EPA, meanwhile, "is calling on industry to be more transparent about the use of fracking chemicals," spokeswoman Betsaida Alcantara said in an email. For a national study on the issue, it has requested the information from nine major drillers, all of whom have complied. Yet there are no rules in place requiring disclosure. That's why Texas' effort is encouraging to some. "If you've got the industry supporting something in Texas and they're putting stuff on a website, it's got to spur things in other states," said Reed of the Sierra Club.

Neighbors, farmworkers ask EPA to ban use of fumigant in California strawberry fields SALINAS, Calif. "When Annette Danzer and her husband moved into a house surrounded by brush and strawberry fields on California's Central Coast, they were drawn by the rural feel and closeness to nature. Three years later, the couple fears the fields near Salinas could become a health threat due to potential use of the pesticide methyl iodide. California regulators approved use of methyl iodide in December despite opposition from scientists and environmental and farmworker groups who claim it's highly toxic and can cause cancer. The chemical would likely be used primarily in California's \$2 billion strawberry industry, which last year produced nearly 90 percent of the nation's strawberries on over 37,000 acres. Danzer and her husband have moved their 10-year-old son, Luke, out of a nearby elementary school because it's close to fields that could be fumigated, and Danzer joined hundreds of thousands of others in submitting comments or signatures to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency regarding a petition seeking to block use of the chemical. The deadline to comment on the petition, filed by the environmental group Earthjustice, is Friday, but it's unclear whether the EPA will take any action. "We are really concerned about methyl iodide," said Danzer, who now drives her son 45 minutes to another school. "This is not just strictly a farmworker issue. The fields are walking distance to homes and schools. The fields are in our watershed."

As Congress seeks delays, panel says US should not wait to reduce global warming gases WASHINGTON "An expert panel asked by Congress to recommend ways to deal with global warming says action needs to be taken "as soon as possible" to reduce the pollution responsible. But Republicans and some Democrats in Congress are pushing measures that would delay or halt emissions reductions. The report from the 22-member committee assembled by the National Research Council was released Thursday. The panel says the most economical way to

reduce pollution is to put a price on carbon pollution from the burning of fossil fuels. Two years ago, the Democratic-led Congress passed a bill in the House to do just that, but it died in the Senate. President Barack Obama also supported such a system. But after Republicans won the House last year, he said he would use other methods.

U.S. House passes 3 bills to expedite, expand drilling The Republican-controlled House has easily passed the last of three bills to expedite and expand oil and gas drilling. In a 243-179 vote Thursday, the House passed a measure that would open up areas off the West and East coasts, Alaska and the eastern Gulf of Mexico to drilling. The Obama administration pulled back on leasing in some of those spots after the Gulf oil spill last year to further evaluate the environmental consequences. It never considered drilling in the Pacific. The bill directs the Interior Department to select lease areas based on how much oil and gas they contain.

HOUSTON CHRONICLE

Republicans, Texans blast planned EPA study of hydraulic fracturing Republican lawmakers and state regulators blasted the Environmental Protection Agency's plans to broadly study the controversial hydraulic fracturing process that is essential to unlocking natural gas from shale formations across the U.S. Rep. Ralph Hall, R-Rockwall, the chairman of the House Science, Space and Technology Committee that was studying the issue today, questioned EPA's objectivity in launching the probe. "Its draft study plan is yet another example of this administration's desire to stop domestic energy development through regulation," Hall said. "The study intends to identify the potential impacts of hydraulic fracturing on drinking water without ever taking into consideration the probability that such an effect may occur." Rep. Andy Harris, R-Md., said the congressionally mandated analysis was a "shotgun approach" that could feed "hysteria" about the safety of hydraulic fracturing.

WATER AND WASTEWATER.COM

Hydrofracking Changes Water Wells Durham, NC - A study by Duke University researchers has found high levels of leaked methane in well water collected near shale-gas drilling and hydrofracking sites. The scientists collected and analyzed water samples from 68 private groundwater wells across five counties in northeastern Pennsylvania and New York. "At least some of the homeowners who claim that their wells were contaminated by shale-gas extraction appear to be right," says Robert B. Jackson, Nicholas Professor of Global Environmental Change and director of Duke's Center on Global Change. Hydraulic fracturing, also called hydrofracking or fracking, involves pumping water, sand and chemicals deep underground into horizontal gas wells at high pressure to crack open hydrocarbon-rich shale and extract natural gas. The study found no evidence of contamination from chemical-laden fracking fluids, which are injected into gas wells to help break up shale deposits, or from "produced water," wastewater that is extracted back out of the wells after the shale has been fractured. The peer-reviewed study of well-water contamination from shale-gas drilling and hydrofracking appears this week in the online Early Edition of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

AMERICAN RIVERS

Blog: Delaware Commission Delays Permit for Frack Water Withdrawal The fight continues for America's Most Endangered River of 2010, the Upper Delaware. Yesterday, the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) unanimously voted to postpone a decision on a water withdrawal permit for fracking in the Marcellus Shale. The permit was proposed by XTO Energy, a subsidiary of ExxonMobil. DRBC had received 7100 emails and another couple hundred letters (as of last night) asking them to delay this decision and allow time for additional public comment. DRBC will keep the public record open from now through to a public hearing to be held in the Broome County, NY region within 30 days (date and location to be determined). DRBC is developing natural gas regulations and is not issuing any drilling permits in the meantime. Therefore, XTO has no need for the water at the moment. "People rallied to stop ExxonMobil's water grab and to protect Oquaga Creek, a beautiful trout stream in the headwaters of the Delaware River. The Commission members heard the people's voice and relented, tabling action on the proposed permit. This is what the public can do when they organize with a unified

voice. Thank you to all who spoke up," said Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper.

NATIONAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL

Blog: House mountaintop removal hearings conclude with strong EPA testimony The Environmental Protection Agency's Nancy Stoner stood up to a panel of coal industry friends at the second House hearing on EPA's mountaintop removal policies yesterday. Her core message: "Americans do not need to choose between having clean water and a healthy economy. They deserve both." A couple dozen anti-mountaintop removal activists, including several who made the long trip from West Virginia and Virginia, helped pack the hearing room. And maybe the coal industry smelled some kind of smackdown coming, because at this week's hearing (unlike last week's), the industry front group FACES of Coal--yeah, those guys--sent a dozen or so people to the hearing for crowd support. As expected, there was more talk at this hearing about the EPA's decision to veto permits for the Spruce 1 Mine in Logan County, WV, and coal-friendly members continued to take EPA to task over its conductivity guidance. But this time, a couple of subcommittee members brought the voice of reason into the discussion.

LOUISVILLE COURIER JOURNAL

Blog: EPA in the lion's den Republicans in West Virginia are holding hearings on the EPA's press for cleaner coal mining, and yesterday a senior EPA official defended the agency's efforts. Ken Ward Jr. from the Charleston Gazette, who was covering the legislative hearing, writes: "Healthier watersheds mean healthier people," said Nancy Stoner, acting assistant administrator for EPA's Office of Water. "It's been a high priority of this administration to reduce the substantial human health and environmental consequences of surface coal mining."

REUTERS NEWS SERVICE

U.S. asks six natgas drillers to disclose waste info Environmental regulators on Thursday directed six natural gas drillers to disclose how they dispose of or recycle waste water in Pennsylvania after a recent Chesapeake Energy Corp accident. A regional office of the Environmental Protection Agency asked Chesapeake, Chevron-owned Atlas Resources, Talisman Energy USA, Range Resources, Cabot Gas and Oil Corp, and SWEPI, LP for the information. The companies did not immediately respond to questions about the EPA request. The request also follows recent reports that said waste water resulting from hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, can contain radioactive particles. "We want to make sure that the drillers are handling their wastewater in an environmentally responsible manner," Shawn Garvin, an EPA regional administrator, said in a release. Garvin said EPA is continuing to work with Pennsylvania officials leading the permitting and regulating of natural gas drilling in the state.

BUFFALO NEWS (NY)

Town Board delays forum on fracking Orchard Park Town Board members have postponed their forum on hydraulic fracturing that was to have been conducted Wednesday. "Everybody's bailed out," Councilwoman Nan Ackerman said at Wednesday night's work session. One expert had another commitment that evening, and executives from National Fuel Gas Co. are to attend an event out of state, she said. She said she would find out when the speakers could attend the forum, and the board agreed to reschedule it. Ackerman suggested allowing some presentations and taking written questions from the public. "It's not to have a political meeting, but an information meeting," she said. The board scheduled the forum after members of the public brought the issue of hydraulic fracturing, also known as fracking, a controversial technique for mining natural gas, to the Town Board.